

## **WELCOME**

At the end of the European Year of Cultural Heritage (EYCH) 2018 – with 14 000 events, 37 countries involved, 10 million European participants, the European Parliament, and in particular the Committee on Culture and Education – we realised that it was worth our tenacious efforts and that the achievements were not only massive in terms of participation and engagement but even unexpected from a long-term perspective.

The definition of cultural heritage, often understood as uniquely related to tangible heritage, shifted to a new vision, consistent with that of UNESCO and including intangible, natural and digital heritage. Consequently, the European investment in cultural heritage, traditionally devoted to restorations and re-use finalised to enhance the local economy, moved to a broader vision, where citizens and societies lay at the core and social cohesion, intercultural dialogue, international cultural relations and innovation provided by the cultural and creative sectors contributed greatly towards achieving Europe's 2020 goals.

The European Music Council (EMC) actively contributed to the EYCH's success by being a part of the Voices of Culture community, where it conveyed the know-how provided by its members, thousands of choirs, musical instrument collectors, dance companies and classical, jazz and traditional musicians. Thank you for your commitment and generous sharing of your unique expertise. You know very well the extent to which music can break walls and build bridges, communities and democracies.

None of us could ever forget the emotion of singing Ode to Joy together all over Europe during the European Culture Forum. It was the best symbol of the Europe we want, willing to sing together in the diversity and unity of our many languages. The way forward opens up to the 2021–2027 Multiannual Financial Framework, where the EYCH results will drive a stronger role and better opportunities for culture. This can start with the new Creative Europe 2021–27, for which I have been reappointed as rapporteur for the European Parliament and where music now has a specific, well-defined line of intervention that will finally place it at the centre of European cultural vision.

I am certain about that and will continue to fight in this sense: For music, for musicians, for Europe.

**MEP Silvia Costa**

*former Chairwoman of the CULT Committee of the European Parliament*